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perhaps well meant but unadvisedly  
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2

A N

# A D D R E S S

TO THE

## C L E R G Y

OF THE

# Church of England:

S H E W I N G

The CAUSE why so many People absent  
themselves from the pure established Com-  
munion of that Church, to the TABER-  
NACLE, Meeting-Houses, &c.

R E C O M M E N D E D

To all TRUE MEMBERS

OF THE

# REFORMED CHURCH.

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*For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and  
heard. Acts iv. 20.*

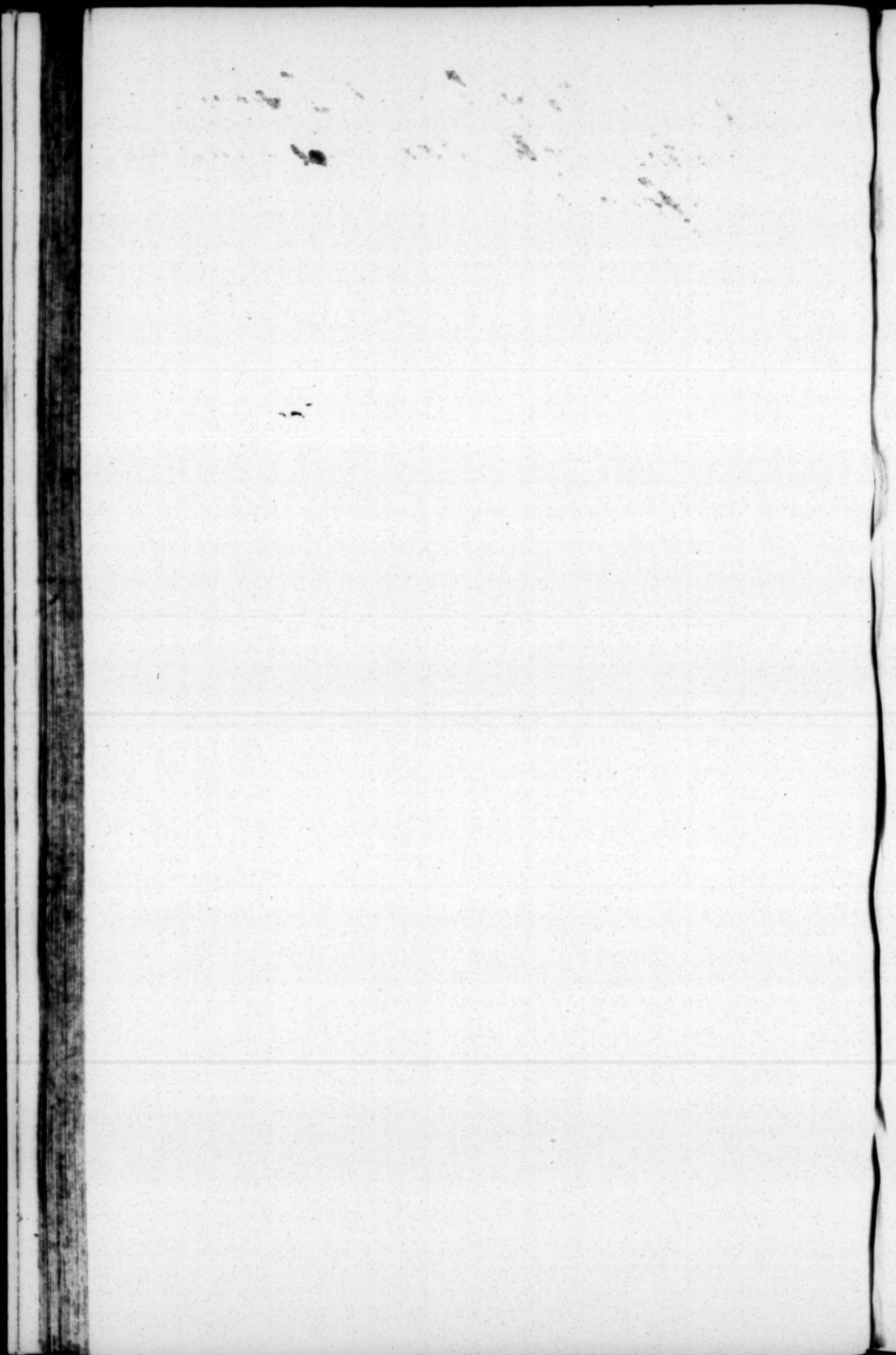
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## L O N D O N:

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M D C C L X I.



THE  
P R E F A C E.

*Reverend Gentlemen*

**G**IYE me leave to address myself to you who are the clergy of our pure established church, and who have the care of the souls of those who are of her communion, as all believers are bound to join themselves to particular churches, when and where they have an opportunity so to do, so all that are admitted into the privileges of a church should be conformable to the government thereof; and “The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful

“ men

" men, in the which the pure Word  
" of God is preached, and the Sacra-  
" ments be duly ministred according  
" to Christ's ordinance, in all those  
" things that of necessity are requisite  
" to the same." Of such a church  
Christ is the head.

The work of a pastor is constantly to attend the service of Christ, with watching for their souls as they that must give an account to him.

There are two principal ends for which the Gospel minister is ordain'd, the one is the winning of souls, and bringing them into Christ, the other is the edification and building up of such as are already brought in, for which purposes God of his infinite mercy make you willing servants,



A N  
**ADDRESS** to the **CLERGY**  
O F T H E  
C H U R C H o f E N G L A N D.

**I**T must needs be a matter of great concern to every one that is a well-wisher to the pure established church, to see so many of her members absent themselves from her communion; and if it is a matter of concern to us who are the laity, how much more ought it to be so to you, who are her pastors, and to whom the care of the church is committed! You are appointed watchmen to the best of churches, a church whose articles are pure, the collects full and expressive, and the litany soundly adapted. How grievous must it then be to a well-disposed mind to see so many people (especially those that have any concern for religion)

## B ambient

absent themselves from the public worship! There must certainly be a cause for this; is it because they dislike the divine ordinances? No; but sorry I am to say it is because the gospel is not fully preached: And indeed it is shocking to hear how you can read over the prayers, which are full of spiritual life, and your sermons only a dead letter; for surely it is your duty to preach Jesus Christ unto the people, and to shew sinners their need of an interest in him, with watching for their souls, as they that must give an account to him [a].

The law is to be preached, but the gospel is to be preached chiefly and mainly, the law accidentally and occasionally; for sure I am, that if the preaching of a crucified redeemer will not constrain people to obedience, you may preach bare morality to eternity, for that never will; in short, to preach morality for sanctification, is like building a house upon the sand. Did you preach agreeable to the articles of our own church, you must preach forth repentance, regeneration, and justification for sanctification; and if all this was done, there would be no room for so

[a] Heb. xiii. 47.

many

many people to absent themselves from our pure church ; but, instead of this good old sound primitive doctrine, what are the generality of your sermons more than a little dry morality, shewing the fitness of things, setting up your own wisdom, which is foolishness with God, and exalting the dignity of man, when your principal motive should be to humble him ; for the christian knows that he is naturally prone to pride, and looks upon it as his deadly enemy, and cannot bear to hear so much of his own abilities, but prays for God's grace that he may be humbled ; and as for preaching morality without faith, it will not produce fruits, for faith is the foundation, and faith comes by hearing ; and how shall we hear without a preacher ? It is plain that your preaching bare morality will not make people christians ; for if it did, our churches would not be so empty, and Christ have died in vain : for the commands of God men knew in the Mosaical law, and the preaching of morality did not make them obey ; therefore Christ came to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And sure I am nothing will give us so

great a hatred to sin, as when we can see that it crucified the Lord of Glory ; and St. John says, " Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God [b] :" It is shocking in these days to hear how ignorant people are of this dear Redeemer, and especially in the country ; if we mention the name of Christ Jesus, the poor people seem as if he was nothing to them ; and if we tell them the necessity of Christ's righteousness being imputed to us, we may as well talk to those that never heard the gospel ; again there are some who absent themselves from church for 30 or 40 years together, yet are never reproved by their pastors ; and is it not shocking to think that these very people will rise in judgment against those to whom the care of their souls is committed ? How grievous it is to hear those who have made a profession of Christianity all their life-time, ignorant of their salvation, strangers to a crucified Redeemer, not knowing the Lord that bought them ; and this is owing to your letter-learned sermons, and preaching the gospel as a bare history, telling the

[b] 1 John iii. 1.

poor

## [ 5 ]

poor people to do this and that ; so that works are preached for merit, and not as the fruits of a true and living faith.

It is high time to lay the axe to the root of the tree, and to preach faith and repentance, regeneration and sanctification ; shew the people what they are by nature ; press home that weighty concern, “ Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The doctrine of regeneration has been so shamefully neglected, that if we talk to some people, they say they hope to be born again at the day of resurrection.

Now is it not to your shame that this ignorance should be found in a christian land ? But you have preached up morality till you have lost it, and people are tired of hearing you, and there is no love to win the soul to God in bare morality ; but in the pure gospel there is displayed a fountain of mercy, and the love of Christ constrains us to obedience. Certainly, if we believe the scripture, there is no other way to be saved but by the gospel ; for Christ himself hath declared, I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father but by me [c].

[c] John xiv. 6.

Ant

And St. Peter assures us that there is no salvation but in Jesus Christ : “ Neither is there salvation in any other : “ for there is none other name under “ heaven given among men, whereby “ we must be saved [d] ;” and further, “ That it is he (Jesus Christ) which was “ ordained of God to be judge of quick “ and dead. ¶ To him give all the “ prophets witness, that through his “ name, whosoever believeth in him “ shall receive remission of sins [e].”

Agreeable to this, St. Paul says, “ This “ is a faithful saying, and worthy of “ all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came “ into the world to save sinners [f] ;” the same apostle also tells us, “ That by “ grace we are saved, through faith ; “ and that not of ourselves : it is the “ gift of God : ¶ Not of works, lest “ any man should boast [g].”

Thus it is evident there is no room for exalting the dignity of man, by setting up his own wisdom, neither to place his own works for merit : To such Christ said, “ I thank thee, O Father, “ Lord of heaven and earth, for thou “ hast hid those things from the wise

[d] Acts iv. 12. [e] Acts x. 42, 43.  
[f] 1 Tim. i. 15. [g] Eph. ii. 8.

and

wife and prudent, and revealed them unto babes ; that is, hast hid the simple gospel from the worldly wise and self-righteous, and reveal'd it to the humble, meek, and teachable disposition.

When a sinner is brought under conviction for sin, and finds himself condemned by God's just law, he can enjoy no comfort till he embraces the glad tidings of the gospel ; then he hears Christ say, " Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The poor sinner who is heavy laden with the weight of his sins, and labours night and day for pardon, is sensible that his doing good works for the future will not make an attonement for what is past, because the law says, *pay me that thou owest* ; therefore he can take no comfort, till he, through grace, receives a saving faith in Christ Jesus, and can see God the Father fully reconciled to him through the Son of his love.

I know that this has driven thousands from the church ; for when a sinner begins to be sorry for his offences, and endeavours to seek for a pardon, he naturally frequents the church, as the fittest place to learn the means necessary

to his salvation ; but what does he, in general hear there ? The LAW : Poor creature ! that will give him no comfort, for he is condemned by the law already ; from the church he goes to the Methodist meeting, &c. where he can hear of Christ Jesus, who came to seek and to save them that are lost ; but indeed Christ is become such a stranger amongst us now, that if we mention his blessed name we are deemed Methodists, and if we speak of the Holy Spirit we are reckoned Enthusiasts. We are become such strangers to the meaning of sanctification, that it is used as a ridicule in vulgar discourse ; indeed it is plain that we are far gone from our primitive religion, for instead of being accounted the most charitable church, as formerly we were, we are become persecutors of the truth.

Let us now consider what is the doctrine agreeable to the scriptures, and our own church ; and first let us see what we are by nature, in order to which we shall begin with our own articles.

## ARTICLE IX.

*Of ORIGINAL or BIRTH SIN.*

**O**riginal sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendred of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this defection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek, [phronema sarcos] which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.

## ARTICLE X.

*Of FREE-WILL.*

**T**HE condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.

## ARTICLE XI.

*Of the JUSTIFICATION of Man.*

**W**E are accounted righteous before God only for the Merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.

## ARTICLE XII.

*Of GOOD WORKS.*

**A**Lbeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins,

sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgment ; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them Faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.

### A R T I C L E XIII.

#### *Of Works before JUSTIFICATION.*

**W**Orks done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-Authors say) deserve grace of congruity ; yea, rather for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

### A R T I C L E XVIII.

#### *Of obtaining Eternal Salvation only by the Name of CHRIST.*

**T**HEY also are to be had accursed, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law,

Law, and the light of Nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.

These are the articles of our own church, which shew us what we are by nature, and how unable we are of ourselves to perform that which is acceptable unto God, and that our salvation wholly depends upon Jesus Christ; how absurd then is it for you to drawl over a little dry morality, without shewing us what we are by nature, and wherein good works are to be accepted. A man by nature may do an action that is good for the substance thereof [h], but he cannot do that which is truly and spiritually good; “A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit [i].” “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil [k].” We are not only born in sin, but left in a condition not able to help ourselves. “Behold I was shaped in iniquities, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

[h] Dan. iv. 27. [i] Mat. vii. 18. [k] Jer. xiii. 23. Rom. iii. Prov. xv. 18, & xxi. 27.

We

We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags ; what shall I say more ? the understanding is full of vanity [l] ; nay it is full of blindnes [m]. The great thing in religion is to know the true God, for if we know him not, how can we truly worship him ? And this no man knows by natural reason, for no man cometh to the Son except the Father draw him ; Every man must be deeply humbled under a sence of sin, and see his redemption in the trinity, before he can know the true God. Then we shall worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three persons as to man's redemption, but one Jehova ; such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost ; so that in the trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or les than another. For Christ is not called the Son as having received his nature from the Father, for then he would have been a creature ; but he received his name as his distinct office in the covenant, for God sware in a covenant before the world began, and Christ covenanted to be the Son, because he cove-

[l] Psal. xcliv. 11. [m] 1 Cor. ii. 12.

nanted

wanted to become the Son of man in order to redeem mankind; the Holy Ghost covenanted to take the name as his distinct office, because he was to apply this covenant to the souls of men for their redemption, so that when the whole elect is perfect, then God shall be ALL in ALL. Let us therefore earnestly endeavour to get into this covenant, and pray to God to give us a deep sense of our sin. Let us fly from sin as our deadly enemy, and rest upon Christ alone. In order to which, let a man keep up an holy fear of God upon his heart, and then he comes under the promise. "The secret " of the Lord is with them that fear " him: and he will shew them his co- " venant [n]." Break your covenant with your old sins and your lusts, or else God will not enter into covenant with you [o]. In this covenant God reveals to us his mind and will, shews himself ready to receive us to grace, by faith we look at Jesus, as having all fullness of grace in him [p]. He received gifts for men, not for himself, but for us, that we might receive of him. O the height, the length, the breadth and depth of the love

[n] Psal. xxv. 14. [o] Mat. vi. 24. [p] John xvi. Col. i. 19.

of

of God in Christ Jesus ! Oh that every one would earnestly seek for this redemption. Ask and you shall have, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. It is man's duty to believe [q] ; the covenant holds forth believing as a free gift, prayer sues it out ; Lord, help my unbelief ! It is the duty of man to repent and turn to God [r] ; the promise holds forth repentance as the gift of God [s] ; it is God's promise to give a new heart [t] ; prayer raises up suitable to the promise, " Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me [u]. " It is man's duty to love God [w] ; it is God's covenant to circumcise the heart to love him [x]. Behold all you whose faces are set Sion-ward, here is a new and living way paved with promises ; believing is the ready way, the seat or habitation of faith is the heart.

The covenant of grace is full of sure mercies and sweet promises that God will give a new heart, a heart to know him, and that he will write his law within us, put his fear into us, and cause

[q] Mark i. 15. [r] Acts xvii. 30. [s] Acts v. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 25. [t] Ezek xxxvi. 26. [u] Ps. li. [w] Mat. xxii. [x] Deut. xxx. 6.

us to walk in his statutes ; the covenant of grace is called a testament or will, indeed the will of the Father revealed to the Son, and by the Son revealed to the world, to manifest the Father's love unto the sons and daughters of men : and Christ testified to the world that what he declared was the mind of God, and sealed it with his blood [y] ; so that the blood that he shed is called the blood of the covenant, yea of the everlasting covenant [z]. God will have all blessings and happiness to flow to us through and by the covenant of grace, for the praise of his own glory, that vain man may not boast ; and herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave himself for us ; now let us see the difference between the covenant of works and a covenant of grace ; the first was a ministration of the letter, a naked commandment, This do and thou shalt live ; the first covenant was made altogether upon condition on both fides, the condition on God's part, They shall live ; the condition on man's part was He must do this or die ; so that the law is a ministration of death, namely, by a curse to them that keep it not ; but the

[y] Hebrews x. 29. [z] Hebrews xiii. 20.

co-

covenant of grace is a ministration of the spirit, and love and mercy ; it shews the guilty a righteousness to satisfy the law, and the way to obtain a pardon. True it is could we justify the law by keeping it, the law would justify us in and by that obedience to it ; but now the law is become weak and unable to justify any man, though powerful and strong enough to condemn every man. In the covenant of works a man is left to stand in his own strength, but in a covenant of grace we are kept by one that is mighty thro' faith unto salvation ; in the covenant of works, God's highest end is the glorifying of his justice, and the covenant of grace is to glorify his grace, because the Lord the mighty God is glorified thereby ; and altho' the covenant of grace is free, and we are justified thereby, yet we are to walk honestly and without blame before him in love ; for it is the end of our redemption ; ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ [a]. He died for us that they which live should not live unto themselves but unto him which died for them [b].

[a] 1 Pet. i. 18. [b] 2 Cor. v. 15.

D

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But I need not say much upon this head, for where the love of God is established in the heart, there will be a delight in keeping his commandments ; justification and sanctification are two inseparable companions, where one doth dwell the other doth lodge ; and as election is the work of the father [c], redemption of the son [d], so sanctification is of the Holy Ghost [e] ; and surely it greatly exposes our ignorance to say, that the doctrine of justification by Christ Jesus gives room to a licentious life ; for he that is truly justified doth as earnestly desire sanctification and holiness, as he doth heaven and happiness. A man may be said to keep his justification and sanctification together, when he trusts his soul in the hands of Christ for salvation, and makes it his busines to die to the world, and live to the honour of Christ in the world ; because thereby we stop the mouths of wicked men. For so is the will of God, that by well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men [f]. The soul that hath Christ's righteousness imputed to him, leans upon Christ as his beloved, and receives

[c] Eph. i. 3. 4. [d] 1 John ii. 1, 2. [e] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [f] 1 Pet. ii. 15.

from

from his fullness grace for grace ; and, when any temptation besets him, he looks with an eye of faith to mount Calvary, and beholds a crucified redeemer, and will not pierce him afresh. I, for my own part, was many years trusting in my own strength, and had a zeal for God, but was not able to perform that which was my duty, because I trusted in a vain confidence of natural righteousness, and this was it which kept off many of the Pharisees ; they trusted to their own righteousness, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, would not submit to the righteousness of God [g]. Surely by what has been said, it plainly appears that a christian's happiness depends not upon his own doings, but on Christ who is of God made unto us righteousness, sanctification, &c. who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace [h].

Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ is the ground and foundation of the spiritual building ; there is no salvation to be hoped for only in and through him, and

[g] Rom. x. 3. [h] 1 Cor. i. 30. 2 Tim. i.  
9. Heb. xiii. 8.

this

this Jesus Christ alone have the apostles and disciples preached, whose followers you ministers should be. Hence Paul despised and would not have that righteousness which he had by the law [i], and did together with all the apostles account Christ alone for his sure foundation,

“ According to the grace of God which  
 “ is given unto me, I have laid the foun-  
 “ dation, &c. Other foundation can no  
 “ man lay than that is laid, which is  
 “ Jesus Christ.” But if the preachers leave off to shew forth the grace of God in Christ, then will their people become more and more wicked and unbelieving, and at last be as without God in the world ; as it was with the heathen, who also heard and spoke a great deal concerning one natural God, but understood nothing of their gracious Father in heaven ; wherefore the God they knew they did not honour him as God, until Christ was made known to and believed on by them ; as appears by the epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, Ye were, says he, at that time without Christ then had ye no hope, and were without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, ye, who some time were far off,

[i] Phil. chap. iii.

are

are made nigh by the blood of Christ [k]. Here you see that the preaching Christ Jesus was the conversion of heathens, and the cause of their obedience; what a delusion then must we be under, to think that the law will keep people in awe? it is plain it will not, by the many shocking instances we see and hear of many dreadful murders lately committed, notwithstanding the threatened vengeance of God, and the speedy execution of the laws of the nation; but sure I am nothing will keep us in an hour of temptation but God's grace, and no motives constrain us like the love of God in Christ Jesus; for the christian sees that the cause of his salvation is God's love, the way is Jesus Christ, the guide is the Holy Ghost, the Scriptures are the rule for our foot-steps, faith is the evidence, hope is the anchor of the soul, baptism and the Lord's Supper are the seals. God's love to sinners was the cause of his sending his Son to die for them [l]; Christ dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification, is the cause of the gospel being preached to sinners [m], the gospel being preached to sinners is

[k] Eph. ii. [l] John iii. 16. Rom. v. 6, 8.  
1 Pet. iii. 18. Tit. iii. 4, 5. [m] Mat. xxviii.  
18, 19. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

the

the cause of their believing [n] ; man's believing is the cause of his justification [o] ; our knowing ourselves to be justified from our sins by faith in the blood of Christ, is the cause of our love to Christ [p] ; our love to Christ is the cause of our obeying Christ [q] ; if ye love me, keep my commandments.

Now it is plain that our acceptable service to God proceeds from our love to God, and if this love be shed abroad in the heart, who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors, thro' him that loved us; and this is experimental religion, tho' by some called enthusiasm, but I call it the fundamental doctrine of the christian religion, and those that will deny that man cannot have this saving knowledge, deny scripture authority, expose their blindness, and make it appear that they are ignorant of the power of the gospel. No man can comprehend this saving knowledge but he that experiences it; and now let us see how

[n] Rom. x. 14, 15, 16. Eph. i. 13. Acts xiii 48. [o] Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom. iii. 26, 28. [p] John iv. 10, 19. [q] 1 John v. 3.

absurd

absurd it is, to count this knowledge enthusiasm. A man was in a foreign country, and had no one to preach this doctrine to him, was in the prime of life, and gave himself no concern about religion, and kept company with those of the same class ; but it pleased God, without making any man an instrument, to bring him under conviction of sin ; he saw that he had broke God's holy law, which demanded a perfect obedience ; for the law says, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things to do them ; he was under great conflicts of conscience night and day, began then to think of religion, but found no solid comfort therein, till thro' grace he was able to look with an eye of faith unto a crucified redeemer ; then could he see that God was reconciled to him thro' his well-beloved son, he having the righteousness of Christ imputed to him for justification ; this caused him to love God and praise redeeming love ; this caused that same Jesus that was crucified upon mount Calvary, whom he thought nothing of before, to become precious to his soul, this changed his heart, and caused him to hate what before was near and dear to him ; in a word this caused him

him to hate sin, and delight in the ways of the Lord ; this gave him that peace which the world cannot give, and caused him not to fear death, tho' greatly exposed to it, but made him long to be dissolved and to be with Christ. And shall this be called enthusiasm ? can any one deny this to be a work of God ? can any one change his own heart ? Is not this a work of grace ? Have we not the scripture-promises for this ? And as for promises from the fear of death, did not Christ himself come to deliver them who thro' fear of death were all their life subject to bondage, and St. John says chapter v. 13. " These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." And indeed I might produce a thousand passages of scripture to support us in our confidence towards God, and that we have a sensible communion with him ; and here let me refer you to the opinion of that worthy servant of Christ, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his nine sermons, p. 132. " The peace of God is that sense of being in friendship with him, that sense of comfort and joy flowing from him, which passeth all understanding, exceeds " the

" the conceptions of those who have  
 " not experienced it, and will exceed  
 " hereafter the present conceptions of  
 " those who have." St. John says,  
 Whatsoever is born of God overcometh  
 the world; and this is the victory  
 that over-cometh the world, even our  
 faith (r).

While a man lives in a state of wilful  
 grievous sin he hath reason to fear and  
 tremble, but he that loves and serves the  
 Lord hath no cause to doubt; doubt-  
 ing makes the countenance sad, and the  
 hands to hang down, and the knees fee-  
 ble. O thou of little faith, wherefore  
 didst thou doubt (s)? Neither be ye  
 of doubtful minds; if the spirit of him  
 that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in  
 ye, he that raised up Christ from the  
 dead shall also quicken your mortal bo-  
 dies by his spirit that dwelleth in you (t).  
 Here we have God's promise, his word,  
 and command, that we should not  
 doubt, but rather rejoice in our sal-  
 vation, giving thanks to God continual-  
 ly. The godly man whose corrupt na-  
 ture is renewed by grace in Christ, and  
 become a new creature, is blessed in a

(r) *1 John v. 4.* (s) *Mat. xiv. 31.*

(t) *Luke xii. 29.*

three-fold respect; first, in this life ; secondly, in death ; thirdly, after death.

First, in this life, because he is conceived of the spirit, born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ; so that the image of God his Father is renewed in him every day more and more (u), and he is able to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God by Christ Jesus ; and God the Father graciously accepts his endeavours, notwithstanding the imperfections of his obedience, and prefers the willingness of his mind before the worthiness of his works. Thus he sanctifies him by degrees, so that he has the assurance of God's fatherly care and protection day and night ; he is always sensible of his infirmities, and leans upon Jesus Christ as his beloved, and when God sends death, the messenger to call him, he sweetly resigns to the welcome message, and enters into that blessed rest which Christ has prepared for him.

Now all this is begun, carried on, and ended in us only in and by Jesus Christ ; and this you cannot deny if you are members of our pure established church.

(u) *John* iii. 5. *Gal.* iv. 16. *John* i. 13.  
*Gal.* xi. 6, 7. *2 Cor.* iv. 8. *Eph.* iv. 2.

How

How absurd then is it for you to preach so much about morality, and so shamefully neglect the gospel, which is the foundation for morality ! Indeed the people are become such strangers to the doctrine of regeneration and justification, that it is now become a mere ridicule ; and was it not for some few worthy ministers that are still left among us, it is greatly to be feared that in time we should run into downright Arianism. Nay it is accounted enthusiasm at this very time for a person to say he has the spirit of God, even by many of the clergy ; but how contrary is this to what we profess ! Do we not pray for the spirit, and acknowledge that we have got it, by praying to God that he would not take it from us, in the communion-office of our own church ? For instance first in the Absolution Prayer we say as follows :

**A** Lmighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live ; and hath given power and commandment to his Ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being

ing penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his Holy Gospel. Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit, &c.

Secondly, In the collect before the Ten Commandments.

**A** Lmighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit. &c.

Thirdly, In the collect for St. Stephen's day.

**G**RANT, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth, for the testimony of thy truth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and being filled with the Holy Ghost, &c.

And fourthly, we acknowledge to have the Spirit, by praying it may not be taken from us;

O God,

O God, make clean our hearts within us.

And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

Many more passages might be produced, but for this there is no occasion, for St. Paul says, Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his ; and many more texts there are to confirm this truth, and expose the blindness of those that deny it.

But I will leave these things to your consideration, and as you are the ministers of so pure and evangelic a church, let me beseech you to be more diligent in preaching the gospel, and then some few of our churches will not be so much thronged, while the others are almost empty. Besides, this will be a means of keeping thousands from straying from the church to Methodist meetings, &c. By preaching the gospel you will discharge your duty, and win souls to Jesus Christ, and then you will find there will be no occasion for making so much noise about morality, for the love of Christ will constrain us to obedience, while, on the contrary, worldly wisdom will neither make us humble,

nor

nor cause our conversion ; this plainly appears by St. Paul's episile to the Corinthians, to whom the apostle, after salutation and thanksgiving, with an exhortation to unity, and reprobating their dissensions, addresses himself in these words ; (y)

Verse 18. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishnes : but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

19. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise ? Where is the scribe ? Where is the disputer of the world ? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world ?

21 For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishnes of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom :

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks, foolishnes ;

24 But unto them which are called

(y) 1 Cor. i. vcr. 18, —— 24.  
both

both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Now this is the doctrine preached by the Methodists, and certainly it is the doctrine of our pure reformed church ; but its having been lately so shamefully neglected, is the very reason why so many people absent themselves from the communion of our church to follow the Methodists ; not because they preach a new doctrine, as some are inclined to believe, but because they preach Christ Jesus and him crucified ; “ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, “ and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” (John xvii. 3.) Where there is love to God, and true faith in Christ, it creates in the soul an earnest desire to hear of Christ ; and our dear redeemer says, in the 10th chapter of St. John’s gospel, “ I am the good shepherd, my sheep hear my voice, and follow me.” So that as soon as people begin to be in earnest about their eternal salvation, you lose them ; “ For where the car-“ case is, there will the eagles be ga-“ thered together ;” where Christ is preached, there will the people go.

I know

I know many instances of this by some particular people who were the most constant communicants in our church, who have now absented themselves from it, and follow the Methodists; and though I do not pretend to justify all the people that follow them as being free from errors, yet I believe them to be, in general, a zealous people, having the power of godliness, and not the form only, loving the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; it is true they are looked upon by the world as the off-scouring of the earth, but herein the world does them much honour; for Christ says, "Woe unto you when the world speaks well of you; for you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." (Mat, x. 22.) "Whoever cometh after me, let him take up his cross, and follow me." (John x. 38.) Again he says, "If ye are my disciples, ye shall suffer persecution." And he says unto us, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven." Now I don't suppose that we are to seek for persecution, but if persecution follow us because we profess Christ and him crucified, then we are to accept it, and be ex-

exceeding glad that we are thought worthy to suffer for his name's sake. For he says, " Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 48.)

This ought to be a striking precaution to us not to persecute any that profess Christ and him crucified ; the apostle Paul says, " I am determined to know nothing else, save Christ and him crucified." (1 Cor. ii. 2.) In another place he says, " Therefore, by the preaching Christ shall the light of the knowledge of the glory of God be displayed in the face of Jesus Christ." Again he says, " In him are all the promises of God, yea and amen ;" (2 Cor. i. 20.) " What shall I say more ? He that was the Son of God became the Son of man, that we who were the sons of men might become the sons of God ; he was made sin for us, that knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," (2 Cor. v. 21.) And was there ever any love like

E. this

this? O let us not give Christ a fresh cause to bleed! “ Is it nothing to ye,  
 “ all ye that pass by? Behold and see  
 “ if ever any man’s sorrow was like  
 “ unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord  
 “ afflicted me in the day of his fierce  
 “ anger?”

O consider this, all ye that are em-  
 laissadors for Christ Jesus, Shew forth  
 this love to the people, that they may  
 not be ignorant of their salvation, and  
 that you may be free from the blood of  
 all men. O let it not be said of us, as it  
 was of the church of Ephesus, “ Never-  
 “ theless, I have somewhat against thee,  
 “ because thou hast left thy first love.  
 “ Remember therefore, from whence  
 “ thou art fallen, and repent, and do  
 “ thy first works; or else I will come  
 “ unto thee quickly, and will remove  
 “ thy candlestick out of his place, ex-  
 “ cept thou repent.” (Rev. ii. 4.)

And indeed it doth plainly appear  
 that we have in a great degree, left our  
 first love, Christ is not only neglected  
 in the pulpit, but even in family devo-  
 tion; and how shamefully are the ap-  
 pointed festivals observed! for instead of  
 being

being kept as times of prayer and thanksgiving, they are regarded as times of drunkenness and diversion, nor is there more regard shewn to **GOOD FRIDAY** than to king Charles's Martyrdom. Well may we be lead captive by sin, when a crucified Redeemer is so little thought of.

May God of his infinite mercy,  
Shew our forgetful feet the way  
That leads to joys on high,  
Where knowledge grows without decay,  
And love shall never die.

A LAYMAN of the  
Church of England.